

# PROCEEDINGS OF THE THIRTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL MEETING

BY PHILLIPS B. STREET

The Thirty-seventh Annual Meeting of the Wilson Ornithological Society was held at Buffalo, New York, from Thursday, April 26, to Sunday, April 29, 1956. It was sponsored by the Buffalo Audubon Society, the Buffalo Ornithological Society and the Buffalo Society of Natural Sciences.

There were four sessions devoted to papers and two business meetings at the Buffalo Museum of Science. Motion pictures by members of the Local Committee were shown at the Museum on Thursday evening, and the Executive Council met at the Hotel Statler at the same time. The Annual Dinner was held at the Statler on Saturday evening, President Burt L. Monroe delivering the President's Address and Dr. Finn Salomonsen, Zoological Museum, University of Copenhagen, speaking on "The Birds of Greenland," with slides and motion pictures.

Early morning field trips were taken to the shore of Lake Erie, southwest of Buffalo, and to Grand Island in the Niagara River. The Sunday field trip included the Oak Orchard Swamp Wildlife Refuge and the Lake Ontario shore west of Rochester.

## FIRST BUSINESS SESSION

President Monroe called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m., Friday, April 27. Welcomes were given by Mr. George F. Goodyear, President of the Buffalo Society of Natural Sciences, Miss Gertrude Webster, President of the Buffalo Audubon Society, and Mrs. Alice Ulrich, President of the Buffalo Ornithological Society. President Monroe responded. The minutes of the 36th Annual Meeting were approved as published in *The Wilson Bulletin* for September, 1955.

### Secretary's Report

The secretary, Phillips B. Street, summarized the principal actions taken at the previous evening's Executive Council meeting as follows:

1. Council accepted invitations from (1) the Minnesota Ornithologists Union, the University of Minnesota, Duluth Branch, and the Duluth Bird Club to meet at Duluth from June 13-16, 1957, (2) the Brooks Bird Club to meet at Oglebay Park, Wheeling, West Virginia, April 24-27, 1958, and (3) the Kentucky Ornithological Society to meet at Kentucky Dam (tentative) in late April, 1959.
2. Keith L. Dixon was reelected editor of *The Wilson Bulletin*.

### Treasurer's Report

The treasurer, Ralph M. Edeburn, submitted the following report on the finances of the Society:

#### REPORT OF TREASURER FOR 1955

Balance as shown by last report, dated December 31, 1954 ..... \$ 3,913.14

#### GENERAL FUND

##### RECEIPTS

Dues:

Active ..... \$ 3,531.00

Sustaining ..... 1,475.00 \$ 5,006.00

Subscriptions to *The Wilson Bulletin* ..... 522.00

Sale of back issues & reprints of *The Wilson Bulletin* ..... 257.45

Gifts:

Library Book Fund ..... \$ 26.00

Miscellaneous .....	41.70	67.70	
Payments for Foreign Postage .....		4.40	
Refund from Registration, Stillwater Meeting .....		96.93	
Miscellaneous Income .....		10.22	5,964.70
Total Receipts .....			<u>\$ 9,877.84</u>

## DISBURSEMENTS

<i>The Wilson Bulletin</i> —printing and engraving .....	\$ 4,009.47	
<i>The Wilson Bulletin</i> —mailing and maintenance of mailing list ...	823.18	
Editor's Expense—clerical .....	100.00	
Treasurer's Expense—printing, postage, etc. ....	250.81	
Secretary's Expense—printing, and postage for annual meeting ...	334.84	
Committee Expense—printing and postage .....	62.16	
Purchase of books from Book Fund for Library .....	22.75	
Purchase of back issues and reprints .....	10.54	
Miscellaneous—other officers .....	68.86	
Total Disbursements .....		<u>\$ 5,682.61</u>
Balance on hand in Twentieth Street Bank, Huntington, West Virginia, December 31, 1955 .....		<u>\$ 4,195.23</u>

## ENDOWMENT FUND

Balance in Savings Account as shown by last report, dated December 31, 1954	\$ 454.34
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*Receipts*

Interest on Investments, Savings and Dividends .....	\$ 293.12	
Sale of U.S. Postal Savings Coupon Bonds (matured) .....	780.00	
Life Membership payments .....	750.00	\$ 1,823.12
Total Receipts .....		<u>\$ 2,277.46</u>

*Disbursements*

Louis Agassiz Fuertes Research Grant .....	\$ 100.00	
Purchase 20 shares Firemans Fund Insurance .....	1,335.00	
Total Disbursements .....		<u>\$ 1,435.00</u>

Balance in Savings Account, Twentieth Street Bank, Huntington, West Virginia, December 31, 1955 .....	<u>\$ 842.46</u>
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*Securities Owned\**

U.S. Savings Bonds, Series "G," dated September 1, 1943 (maturity value \$1,000.00) .....	\$ 1,000.00
U.S. Savings Bonds, Series "G," dated December 20, 1944 (maturity value \$1,500.00) .....	1,479.00
U.S. Savings Bonds, Series "G," dated June 1, 1945 (maturity value \$500.00) .....	489.50
U.S. Savings Bonds, Series "G," dated July 1, 1945 (maturity value \$900.00) .....	881.10
U.S. Savings Bonds, Series "G," dated October 1, 1945 (maturity value \$1,400.00) .....	1,370.60
U.S. Savings Bonds, Series "F," dated February 1, 1947 (maturity value \$2,000.00) .....	1,774.00
U.S. Savings Bonds, Series "F," dated April 1, 1948 (maturity value \$2,000.00) .....	1,722.00
U.S. Savings Bonds, Series "F," dated October 1, 1948 (maturity value \$1,450.00) .....	1,210.94

U.S. Savings Bonds, Series "F," dated April 1, 1950 (maturity value \$1,000.00) .....	809.00
Total Value of Government Bonds .....	\$10,736.14
Massachusetts Investors Trust (123 shares at \$32.84) .....	4,039.32
Firemans Fund Insurance (50 shares at \$66.00) .....	3,300.00
Total Securities Owned .....	\$18,075.46
Total in Endowment Fund,** December 31, 1955 .....	18,917.92

\*Bonds carried at redeemable value December 31, 1955 and stocks carried at closing prices December 31, 1955.

\*\**In Reserve:*

Louis Agassiz Fuertes Research Fund (special gifts) \$	325.00
S. Morris Pell Fund (special gift) .....	75.00

Respectfully submitted,  
/s/RALPH M. EDEBURN,  
Treasurer.

*Research Grant Committee*

Kenneth C. Parkes, chairman, reported that five applications for the Louis Agassiz Fuertes Research Grant were received, with two being outstanding, resulting in an exact tie vote. The Committee had recommended that Council either (1) award duplicate grants of \$100, (2) award a split grant of \$50 each, or (3) choose between the two and give a single award. Council voted to make an exception to the general rule and awarded duplicate \$100 grants to John Burton Millar, University of Wisconsin, whose study is "An investigation of possible factors involved in the initiation of migration," and Lester L. Short, Jr., Cornell University, who is studying "Hybridization and isolating mechanisms in North American Flickers (*Colaptes*)."

An S. Morris Pell award for the encouragement of bird art of \$25 was voted to Donald R. Altemus, State College, Pennsylvania.

*Membership Committee*

John M. Jubon, chairman, reported by letter that the names of 169 prospective new members enrolled since the 1955 meeting were posted for the inspection of members and to be elected at the final business meeting. On December 31, 1955, the Society had 106 life, 297 sustaining and 1216 active members, a total of 1619. 13 new life members have been added since January 1, 1955. There were 163 institutional subscriptions to *The Wilson Bulletin*.

*Library Committee*

H. Lewis Batts, chairman, reported by letter. During the past twelve months the Society has received gifts to the Library of 66 books, 214 reprints, 140 magazines, 33 bulletins, 22 pamphlets and one phonograph record. Ten additional books have been purchased by funds given by members. In all, 72 persons and 3 institutions have made gifts to the Society Library. In addition, the Library has received serial publications on birds from all over the world in exchange for *The Wilson Bulletin*. These exchanges now total 80 titles; 20 other serials are received as gifts.

The University of Michigan has done its part by keeping the accessions catalogued and the completed serial volumes bound up to date. It has also supplied the manpower and outbound postage for sending out loans to all members who have requested items. The University Museum of Zoology staff has also many times volunteered

bibliographic research help to Society members who needed help. The University has continued to receive and store back stock of *The Wilson Bulletin* and to send out numbers, volumes, and sets on order from the Treasurer.

The annual list of books added to the Library was not published last September but will be published this year. At that time we also hope to publish a list of the serial holdings.

There have been many generous gifts, but the outstanding donor is Capt. Karl Haller of the U.S. Air Force, a member of the Society for 22 years. His gifts, 28 books since the last publication of the Society holdings, included such important and costly items as Peters "Check-list of Birds of the World" (7 vols.); Ridgway and Friedmann, "Birds of North and Middle America" (11 vols.); Bannerman's "Birds of the British Isles" (4 vols.); and Cory and Hellmayr, "Catalogue of Birds of the Americas" (19 vols.).

#### *Conservation Committee*

Robert A. Pierce, chairman, reported by letter. During 1955, three articles were prepared by the Conservation Committee for publication in *The Wilson Bulletin*. Two of these have been published; one on Poisons and Wildlife will appear shortly. A request was received from the British Waterfowl Trust for permission to reprint the article on waterfowl conservation by Frank Bellrose, Jr. and Thomas G. Scott. The writer wishes to express his sincere appreciation for the splendid cooperation which he received from each member of the Committee which, aside from your chairman, was composed of P. F. English, Lee E. Yeager, Thomas G. Scott and Frank Bellrose, Jr.

As most of the Society members know, there are a number of pressing current conservation problems. One of the most important at the moment is the invasion of wildlife refuges and National Forests by the armed forces and by commercial interests. One of the latest moves in this respect is the introduction of two bills, S. 3360 and H.R. 9965, by which the U.S. Army seeks Congressional approval for the transfer of 10,700 acres of the Wichita Mountains National Wildlife Refuge in Oklahoma for enlargement of Fort Sill. Previous attempts by the Army to secure this land have failed and the writer would like to point out that undoubtedly the vigorous individual efforts of some of the members of this organization were an important factor in encouraging Secretary McKay to refuse the Army's request for transfer of this land to Fort Sill. Your efforts must continue, however.

The Armed Services are attempting to take over all or parts of various other refuges, National Forest areas or Park areas. The plan to extend the photoflash bombing area to the edge of the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge in Texas with its unpredictable effects upon the Whooping Cranes is familiar to all. Public opposition appears to have stopped this latter project, although it is well to remember that the projects of some agencies never seem to die but only go into hiding for a time. The policy of making oil and gas leases on National Refuges does not appear to be a management technique which can enhance the value of these areas very greatly for wildlife but the writer does not know the present status of this policy.

Some good things have happened for conservation during 1955. Revision of the old mining law makes it possible to eliminate most fraudulent or invalid mining claims. A method of distributing the \$13,500,000 surplus Federal Aid to Wildlife Restoration funds was authorized by Congress and the uses that can be made of the money were broadened somewhat. According to information reaching the writer, a revised plan of State and Federal cooperation may be proposed which will require the gathering of more adequate ecological data to support administrative decisions regarding introduc-

tions of exotic and native animals. This plan, if accepted and followed by the States, cannot help but improve this program. The plan cannot prevent the individual States from continuing their own programs, however, and this fact should serve to remind us that much conservation work is done at the State and local levels and that each of us can perform a service for conservation in our own States and localities.

Congressional action on various bills of importance to conservation has been influenced by the activities of various conservation groups and individuals. The writer wishes again to stress the importance of each individual's personal efforts in bringing matters of conservation importance to the attention of lawmakers and conservation officials.

#### *Endowment Committee*

In the absence of Robert T. Gammell, chairman, Leonard C. Brecher spoke briefly on the value of life memberships, stressing the fact that a life membership taken out in four installments during one's years of high earning power may be doubly appreciated upon retirement. He read the names of life members enrolled since January 1, 1955.

#### *Temporary Committees*

The President appointed the following temporary committees:

##### *Auditing Committee*

N. Bayard Green, Chairman  
Lois Garrett  
Hugh Land

##### *Resolutions Committee*

Mrs. Betty Carnes, Chairman  
Maurice Graham Brooks  
Pershing B. Hofslund

##### *Nominating Committee*

Aaron M. Bagg, Chairman  
Karl H. Maslowski  
A. W. Schorger

#### SECOND BUSINESS SESSION

The final business session was called to order at 10:00 a.m., Saturday, April 28.

The applicants for membership, whose names were posted, were elected to membership.

#### *Report of the Auditing Committee*

The committee reported by letter that they had examined the books and accounts of the treasurer and found them to be in good order.

#### *Report of the Resolutions Committee*

BE IT RESOLVED that the Wilson Ornithological Society express its deep appreciation to the Buffalo Audubon Society, the Buffalo Ornithological Society and the Buffalo Society of Natural Sciences for their warm hospitality at this, our Thirty-seventh, Annual Meeting. Most especially we wish to thank Fred T. Hall and the hard-working members of the Local Committee for their most efficient handling of the many time-consuming details of this meeting.

The projection of our slides and films by Charles Simmons has been especially notable.

We have enjoyed the stimulating exhibits and well planned facilities of the Museum of Science. We are most grateful to the Museum staff and the Local Committee for making our Buffalo stay so pleasant and profitable.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of the Wilson Ornithological Society

be urged in this critical time for conservation interests to express their opinions and desires to the appropriate legislative and administrative bodies.

*Election of Officers*

The Nominating Committee proposed the following officers for the coming year: President, John T. Emlen; First Vice-President, Lawrence H. Walkinshaw; Second Vice-President, Phillips B. Street; Secretary, Fred T. Hall; Treasurer, Ralph M. Edeburn; Elective members of the Executive Council, Harvey I. Fisher (term expires 1957), Leonard C. Brecher (term expires 1958), and Andrew J. Berger (term expires 1959).

The report of the committee being accepted, and there being no nominations from the floor, the secretary was instructed to cast a unanimous ballot for these nominees.

PAPERS SESSIONS

*Friday, April 27*

Harold D. Mitchell, Buffalo, New York, *Ornithological Introduction to the Niagara Frontier*, slides.

Clark S. Beardslee, Kenmore, New York, *Birds' Migration Routes in the Niagara Frontier Area*, slides.

Frederick M. Helleiner, Toronto, Ontario, *Bird Observations on a Trans-Atlantic Crossing*.

Finn Salomonsen, Zoological Museum, University of Copenhagen, *The Greenland Bird Banding System*, slides.

James Baird, Norman Bird Sanctuary, Newport, Rhode Island, *Yellow-throated Warbler Breeding in Sycamores and Collected Along the Delaware River in New Jersey* (read by title).

Donald J. Borror and Carl R. Reese, Department of Zoology and Entomology, Ohio State University, *Vocal Gymnastics in Wood Thrush Songs* (presented on tape), slides.

William W. H. Gunn, Federation of Ontario Naturalists, Toronto, Ontario, *Some Warbler Songs on Tape*, tape.

Dean Amadon, American Museum of Natural History, *Some Problems in Preparing an Exhibit of Local Birds*, slides.

Josselyn Van Tyne, University of Michigan Museum of Zoology, *The Discovery of the Evening Grosbeak*, slides.

Elsa G. Allen, Laboratory of Ornithology, Cornell University, *Some Manuscript Sources in Early American Ornithology*, slides.

James Hartshorne, Laboratory of Ornithology, Cornell University, *The Voice of the Trumpeter Swan*, tape and slides.

Arthur A. Allen, Laboratory of Ornithology, Cornell University, *The Voice of the Whooping Crane*, tape and motion pictures.

*Saturday, April 28*

Robert L. Smith, Department of Conservation, Cornell University, *Some Factors Influencing the Colonization of Coniferous Plantations by Birds*, slides.

David A. West, Department of Conservation, Cornell University, *Problems in the Appraisal of Hybrid Pheucticus Grosbeaks*, slides.

Lester L. Short, Jr., Department of Conservation, Cornell University, *Hybridization Between Gilded and Red-shafted Flickers*, slides.

Charles G. Sibley, Department of Conservation, Cornell University, *Hybridization and Sexual Selection as Factors in the Evolution of Birds*, slides.

Oliver H. Hewitt, Department of Conservation, Cornell University, *Studies of the Newfoundland Willow Ptarmigan*, tape and slides.



- Gerald R. Rising, Rochester, New York, *The New York State Waterfowl Census*.
- Robert D. Burns, Michigan State University, Department of Zoology, *Movements of the Cardinal*, slides.
- Maurice Graham Brooks, West Virginia University, *Diurnal Migration Along Certain Appalachian Ridges*.
- Kenneth C. Parkes, Carnegie Museum, *Winter Survival of an Escaped Audubon's Caracara*.
- Lawrence I. Grinnell, Ithaca, New York, *African Birdlife from Cape to Equator*, motion pictures.
- Edward M. Brigham, Jr., Kingman Museum of Natural History, Battle Creek, Michigan, *Some Birds of Woody Island, Lake Bowdoin National Wildlife Refuge, Montana*, motion pictures.
- Crawford H. Greenewalt, Wilmington, Delaware, *Slow-Motion Pictures of the Ruby-throated Hummingbird in Flight* (read by title), motion pictures.

## ATTENDANCE

Members and guests who registered totalled 145. Eleven states, the Province of Ontario, Argentina and Denmark were represented.

From **Indiana**: 2—*Indianapolis*, Mildred Campbell, Mrs. S. G. Campbell.

From **Kentucky**: 4—*Anchorage*, Mr. and Mrs. Burt L. Monroe; *Louisville*, Mr. and Mrs. Leonard C. Brecher.

From **Massachusetts**: 3—*Amherst*, Jerry Brown; *Dover*, Mr. and Mrs. Aaron M. Bagg.

From **Michigan**: 11—*Alma*, Lester E. Eyer; *Ann Arbor*, Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Branch, Peter Stettenheim, Josselyn Van Tyne; *Battle Creek*, Mr. and Mrs. Edward M. Brigham, Jr., Lawrence H. Walkinshaw; *Jackson*, Robert A. Whiting; *Lansing*, Robert D. Burns; *Mt. Pleasant*, Nicholas L. Cuthbert.

From **Minnesota**: 1—*Duluth*, Pershing B. Hofslund.

From **New Jersey**: 1—*Tenafly*, Betty Carnes.

From **New York**: 78—*Albany*, Ralph S. Palmer, Mrs. Dayton Stoner; *Alleghany*, Stephen W. Eaton; *Armonk*, Kenneth D. Morrison; *Buffalo*, Agnes C. Abrams, Mr. and Mrs. Harold H. Axtell, Sylvia Booth Brockner, John H. Caul, Mr. and Mrs. Edward R. Cumiskey, Richard Drobits, Mary Louise Emerson, Rose W. Facklam, John S. Filor, Mrs. Hans H. Gros, Fred T. Hall, Bernard Hochmuth, Ellsworth Jaeger, Ralph Kaz, Mercedith Lovelace, Mrs. Lloyd Mansfield, Harold D. Mitchell, Bernard Nathan, Donald J. Powers, Eugenia Praemassing, Kathryn Praemassing, Mr. and Mrs. Malcolm M. Renfrew, Frances M. Rew, Edith M. Robson, James Savage, Albert R. Shadle, Charles E. Simmons, Mrs. Howard C. Smith, William R. Taber, Mrs. Margaret M. Teare, Heather G. Thorpe, Lena Turner, Mr. and Mrs. Edward C. Ulrich, Mrs. Elsie E. Webb; *Delmar*, Victor H. Calhane; *East Aurora*, R. D. Coggeshall; *Fredonia*, Willard F. Stanley; *Hamburg*, Mrs. John E. Bacon, Mrs. LeRoy Melberg; *Ithaca*, Hermon P. Adam, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur A. Allen, Millicent S. Fecken, Richard B. Fischer, Lawrence I. Grinnell, James M. Hartshorne, Mrs. Southgate Y. Hoyt, Edward L. Seeber, Lester L. Short, Jr., Charles G. Sibley, Robert L. Smith, David A. West, Maurice J. Zardus, Jr.; *Kenmore*, Clark S. Beardslee, Alice S. Dietrich, Philip S. Greene, Frances Rathbun, Gertrude G. Webster; *Manhasset*, Mary Anne Heimerdinger; *New York*, Dean Amadon, Mrs. C. N. Edge, Eugene Eisenmann; *Orchard Park*, Robert F. Andrie; *Rochester*, H. Everest Clements, Reginald N. Hartwell, Mr. and Mrs. Gerald R. Rising; *Waterloo*, Jason A. Walker; *Watertown*, Harold W. Hill; *Williamsville*, Marie A. Wendling.

- From **Ohio**: 16—*Cleveland*, Mr. and Mrs. H. C. Dobbins, Adela Gaede, Warner Seely, Mildred Stewart; *East Cleveland*, Vera Carrothers; *Painesville*, Mrs. Robert V. D. Booth; *Poland*, Mr. and Mrs. Evan C. Dressel; *Steubenville*, Mr. and Mrs. Clinton S. Banks, Earl W. Farmer; *Toledo*, John M. McCormick, Mr. and Mrs. Albert R. Tenney, Robert H. Turner.
- From **Pennsylvania**: 9—*Allport*, Elsie C. Erickson; *Butler*, Mr. and Mrs. Frank W. Preston; *Chester Springs*, Mr. and Mrs. Phillips B. Street; *Kane*, Sybil K. Kane; *Mt. Jewett*, Mrs. Florence Kane Johnson; *Pittsburgh*, Kenneth C. Parkes, George B. Thorp.
- From **West Virginia**: 2—*Huntington*, Ralph M. Edeburn; *Morgantown*, Maurice G. Brooks.
- From **Wisconsin**: 1—*Madison*, John T. Emlen.
- From **Ontario, Canada**: 14—*Fort William*, A. E. Allin; *Guelph*, Alex T. Cringan, H. G. Mack, A. de Vos; *Hamilton*, Eric W. Bastin, R. G. C. MacLaren, George W. North; *Pickering*, Mr. and Mrs. J. Murray Speirs; *Toronto*, J. Bruce Falls, Mr. and Mrs. William W. H. Gunn, Frederick M. Helleiner, Mrs. Osborne Mitchell.
- From **Argentina**: 1—*Buenos Aires*, William H. Partridge.
- From **Denmark**: 1—*Copenhagen*, Finn Salomonsen.

## POISONS AND WILDLIFE

### *A Contribution from the Wilson Ornithological Society Conservation Committee*

The empirical title of this article is an admission of the broadest possible consideration, here, of the relationships of animal-control poisons to wildlife generally. Indeed, this discussion cannot be a coverage, however broad, of a subject handled only inadequately in many papers and texts; rather, it is an attempt to sketch the amazing scope and application of poisons used in control, and to contemplate their mass impact on mammals, birds, fish and other life esteemed by man.

In this attempt, the commentator wishes to be objective. Poisons, with affinities for both production and destruction of valuable crops, are obviously two-sided in significance; no discussion, even in a medium dedicated to resource appreciation and management, should overlook poison's role in the provision of man's food and fiber, to say nothing of his health and well-being. This, then, is neither approval nor denunciation of poisons *per se*; it is a plea for facts based on objective and controlled research; and moderation in the use of new, highly toxic poisons until such information is available.

Some agricultural remedies involving poisons are now so widely accepted that they are taken as a matter of course. The use of lead arsenate in potato-bug control is illustrative, though but one of scores of examples. Thousands of poison compounds—organic and inorganic, natural and synthetic—are known, but probably not over 100 are actually employed in insecticides. Others are being introduced at a rapid rate.

Herbicides, or plant-killing compounds, are newer, but they have a manifest potential in the field of plant control as great as insecticides and related poisons in animal control. Even less is known of their ultimate effects on birds and mammals than those of the older, longer-used animal-control poisons. Many of these effects are from the standpoint of cover, which also represents, directly or indirectly, an important source of wildlife food supply.

It is unfortunate, indeed, that insecticides and herbicides collectively—so dramatically